

**Summary of the
Proficiency Testing Committee Meeting
November 21, 1997**

The National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) Proficiency Testing Committee met from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on November 21, 1997. The meeting was led by Ms. Anne Rhyne, Chair of the Proficiency Testing Committee. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants and invited guests is given in Attachment B. A copy of the Conference Call agenda is given in Attachment C.

INTRODUCTION

The principal purpose of the meeting was to discuss revisions to Appendices A and C and to discuss the status of other appendices.

Agenda Items

1. Old business including review of Action Items of November 6, 1997.
2. Other issues.
3. Discussion of Appendix A revisions.
4. Discussion of Appendix C, continued from November 6, 1997.
5. Discussion of status of new Appendices E, F, G and H.
6. Summary of Action Items.

ACTION ITEMS

The status of Action Items of November 6, 1997, was reviewed. These are as follows:

- Appendix C has been faxed to Ms. Reenie Parris, Mr. Robert Graves, and Mr. Barry Lesnick.
- A copy of Mr. Matthew Caruso's memo to Mr. Graves has been faxed to all members of the PT Committee.
- Appendix E has been e-mailed to all members of the PT Committee.
- Two conference calls are to be set up for Mr. Faust Parker.

- Minutes of previous meetings are to be completed by Mr. Bill Gutknecht.

OTHER ISSUES

Ms. Jeanne Mourrain has sent a written policy to Ms. Anne Rhyne that describes how NELAC committee meetings are to be run at Interim and Annual Meetings. Comments received more than 30 days before the Interim and Annual Meetings are to be considered and any relevant responses are to be included in the document(s) published for discussion at these meetings. Mr. Ken Jackson noted that the intent of the policy is to be sure that all comments received by NELAC committees are addressed. Mr. George Breuer noted that this will be possible for the Interim Meetings but difficult for the Annual Meetings. Mr. Chuck Wibby noted that the PT Committee takes care to address all comments. These are considered in face-to-face meetings of the committee that occur before the Interim and Annual Meetings.

A set of comments on Chapter 2 and the Appendices was received from the State of California. It was decided that there was not sufficient time to include any responses to these comments in the documents to be put on the web site in preparation for the next Interim Meeting. Mr. Wibby will review these comments and send highlights to the committee members.

Ms. Rhyne stated that she will help subcommittees set up teleconference calls.

It was noted that Arizona and Maryland have applied for participation in NELAC. December 31, 1997, was set as the tentative date for application from the states. Note: Recent information indicates that neither Arizona nor Maryland will apply for recognition as accrediting authorities during this first round.

APPENDIX A

Mr. Tom Coyner was not present and so discussion of Appendix A was delayed. However, during the course of the teleconference, comments and proposed changes on Appendix A were received from Mr. Coyner by e-mail. It was decided that committee members will review this input from Mr. Coyner and send comments to Ms. Rhyne.

APPENDIX C

Mr. Matthew Caruso noted that changes to Appendix C have been done principally to improve the clarity of the document. Also, he noted that Mr. Paul Britton has not supplied information on analytes and concentration limits that would be used in this Appendix. Ms. Reenie Parris stated that Mr. Ray Wasselman will send out a revision of the EPA standard supplied to the PT Committee at the Dallas meeting. Mr. Wibby reiterated that lists of analytes, concentration limits, and acceptance limits are needed. Ms. Parris replied that the EPA standard will provide this information. She was not sure that backup data would be available in the standard. It was noted that Mr. Britton has stated that whole data sets yield too many failures; he believes subsets of the data are better suited for establishment of standards. Mr. Caruso believes that the PT Committee may need to perform its own data analysis. This issue makes it clear that Chapter 2 and/or the appendices need to provide guidance for dealing with bad data collected by PT

Providers. Data acceptance criteria are needed. In some cases, data from other sources may need to be used to determine pass/fail criteria.

A vote was taken on acceptance of the proposed modifications of Appendix C as presented by Mr. Caruso. All voting members present voted yes for acceptance of the proposed changes and presentation of the changes at the interim meeting.

Ms. Parris expressed concern about the Proficiency Testing Oversight Body having to approve sample designs. She noted that the National Institute of Standards and Technology wants PT providers to take the responsibility to submit designs that already meet criteria.

NEW APPENDICES

New appendices are to be drafted by December 15, 1997. Appendix E on microbiology has been drafted.

A teleconference on Appendix F on radiochemistry is planned. It was noted that radiochemistry is covered in the National Standards. Also, Mr. George Breuer has comments relevant to Appendix F from the Department of Energy (DOE). He predicts conflicts with some DOE equations.

Mr. Parker is to be called about the status of Appendix G on biology.

Mr. Wibby will have a draft of Appendix H on air PT samples completed by December 15, 1997.

OTHER BUSINESS

The interim meeting is definitely scheduled for January 13 to 16, 1998.

The next teleconference is scheduled from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on December 4, 1997.

ACTION ITEMS
Proficiency Testing Committee
November 21, 1997

Item No.	ACTION	Date Completed
1	Ms. Rhyne is to assist Mr. Faust Parker set up subcommittee conference calls to discuss Appendix G, Biology.	
2	Comments on Appendix A, as revised by Mr. Tom Coyner, are to be submitted to Ms. Rhyne.	
3	Mr. Wibby will review comments from California and distribute his summary to the committee members.	
4	Ms. Rhyne will send a copy of the National Standards to Mr. Breuer for his work on Appendix F, Radiochemistry.	

PARTICIPANTS
Proficiency Testing Committee
November 21, 1997

Name	Affiliation	Phone Numbers
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Ms. Barbara Burmeister (new)	Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene	T: (608) 833-1770, ext. 107 F: (608) 833-1019 E: burmie@mail.slh.wisc.edu
Matt Caruso	NY State Dept. of Health	T: (518) 485-5570 F: (518) 485-5568 E: caruso@wadsworth.org
Tom Coyner (absent)	Analytical Products Group	T: (614) 423-4200 F: (614) 423-5588 E: apg@citynet.net
Dr. Faust Parker (absent)	Espey, Huston, & Assoc., Inc.	T: (713) 977-1500 F: (713) 977-9233
Reenie Parris (invited guest)	National Institute for Standards and Technology	T: (301) 975-3103 F: (301) 977-0685 E: Reenie.Parris@nist.gov
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Ken Jackson NELAC Board Liaison		

PT CONFERENCE CALL
AGENDA

Friday November 21, 1997, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. EDT

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1. Old Business:
Review Action Items from 11/6 call
 2. Other Issues
 3. Discussion of Appendix A Revisions (Tom)
 4. Discussion of Appendix C Revisions, continued from 11/6 (Matt)
 5. New Documents - Appendices due 12/15
 - 1) Standards for Acceptance Limits & Sample Composition
 - 2) Appendix E - Microbiology (1st draft complete)
 - 3) Appendix F - Radiochemistry
 - 4) Appendix G - Biology
 - 5) Appendix H - Air
 6. Summary of Action Items